

may have been, it was one of the holiest symbols of the national religion. It might very well be a conventional way of representing a tree stripped of its leaves ; and If Osiris was a tree-spirit, the bare trunk and branches might naturally be described as his backbone. The setting up of the column The setting would thus, as several modern scholars believe, shadow forth "mL the resurrection of the god, and the importance of the have been occasion would explain and justify the prominent part of which the king appears to have taken in the ceremony.¹ It god's re-is to be noted that in the myth of Osiris the mV<0-tree which smrec lcm shot up and enclosed his dead body, was cut down by a king and turned by him into a pillar of his house.² We can hardly doubt, therefore, that this incident of the legend was supposed to be dramatically set forth in the erection of the *ded* column by the king. Like the similar custom of cutting a pine-tree and fastening an image to it in the rites of Attis, the ceremony may have belonged to that class of customs of which the bringing in of the May-pole is among the most familiar. The association of the king and queen of Egypt with the *ded* pillar reminds us of the association of a King and Queen of May with the May-pole.³ The resemblance may be more than superficial.

¹ As to the *tet* or *ded* pillar and its erection at the festival see H. Brugsch 51 sqq. ; Miss Margaret A. Murray, *The Osireion at Abydos*, pp. 27, 28 ; in *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Alterthumskunde*, 1881, pp. 84, i. 2, p. 70. In a letter to me (dated 96; &/. , *Religion und Mythologie der alten Aegypter*, p. 618 ; A. Erman, professor P. E. Newberry tells me that he believes Osiris to have been originally a cedar-tree god imported into Egypt from the Lebanon, and he regards the *ded* pillar as a lopped cedar-

tree. The
 (London, 1882), pp. 46 sq. Sir J. flail, as a symbol of Osiris, he
 believes to
 Gardiner Wilkinson, *Manners and be the instrument used to collect*
 incense.
Customs of the Ancient Egyptians (L>Qil- A similar flail is used by
 peasants in
 don, 1878), iii. pp. 67, note¹⁵, and 82 ; Crete to extract the ladanum
 gum from
 A. Wiedemann, *Religion of the Ancient* the shrubs. See P. de
 Tournefort,
Egyptians^ pp, 289 sq+ ; G. Maspero, *Relation d'un Voyage*
du Levant
Histoire ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient (Amsterdam, 1718), i.
 29, with the
Classique, i. 130 sq. ; A. Moret, plate. For this
 reference I am indebted
Des caractères religieux de la royauté to Professor Newberry.
Pharaonique^ p. 153, note i ; *id2 pfectarch*, 7, w rf 0«>w, 15.
 See
Mystères Égyptiens, pp. 12-16 ; E. A.
 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*,
 ii. 122, 124, sg. ; *id. Osiris and the*³ *The Magic Art and the*
Evolution
Egyptian Resurrection, i. 6, 37, 48, *of Kings*, ii. 88-90.